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SUBJECT: SADC ORGAN TROIKA ASSESSES STATUS OF 2007 ELECTION DISPUTE

REF: Maseru 376

¶1. The SADC Organ on Politics, Defense, and Security Cooperation sent the current leadership Troika to Lesotho for its initial review of the status of the dispute over the distribution of parliamentary seats in the 2007 election (reftel). Foreign Ministers from Mozambique, the current Organ chair, Swaziland, and Zambia met with all stakeholders on Monday, October 26; their meetings included individual sessions with the diplomatic corps, governing party (Lesotho Congress for Democracy), all opposition parties, and the Christian Council of Lesotho (CCL), which has been mediating talks since early August ¶2009. The Troika will issue a report noting its findings and recommendations.

¶2. Mozambican Minister of Foreign Affairs, Oldemiro Baloi, mentioned that the session with the opposition parties had been particularly contentious, although he was reluctant to provide any other details. In a press statement issued on Tuesday, October 27, the Troika noted that the key issues raised by all stakeholders included: confidence in the mediation efforts of the CCL; a need for electoral law reform to prevent future disputes; a need for collaboration between SADC and CCL; a need for innovative, holistic ways to promote and speed up the political dialogue.

¶3. Post will provide updates once the Troika's report is released; no expected release date has been given.

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